

Serial No.: 10/702,365

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 22, with the following amended paragraph:

-- Figure 2 is a flow chart illustrating exemplary steps for automated signaling link utilization analysis according to an embodiment of the present invention. Referring to Figure 2, in step 200, signaling messages are copied from signaling links and stored in a database. In Figure 1, this function is performed by message copy functions 108. In one exemplary implementation, message copy functions 108 broadcast network monitoring service request via UDP to network monitoring processors 102. Each network monitoring processor 102 may be preconfigured to service a particular message copy function 108 or group of message copy functions 108. Accordingly, the network monitoring processor provisioned to service a particular message copy function 108 responds to the broadcast service request with a service acceptance. A TCP/IP connection is then established between the message copy function 108 and one of the network monitoring processors 102 via network monitoring transport card 112. Copied messages are then sent over the TCP/IP connection and stored in signaling message database [[112]] 122. --